

# COONHOUND ADVISOR

Trevor Wade

Recently I found myself combing through the pages of March issues of *Coonhound Bloodlines* from 1988 through the last issue in 2022 for a project I was working on. What a great source of history to have at one's disposal. A lot can be learned from reading and re-reading old sources of information. In one issue, the March 2015 issue, I made note that I wanted to revisit a couple of the topics in that Advisor Column for current readers. With Winter Classic taking up most of my time, and a 7-pound, 5-ounce addition to my family taking up the rest of it, I figured this month would be the perfect time to do so. Enjoy these topics that Allen wrote about in March of 2015 that are still true today.

### Off Game and a Coon in Same Tree

**Q:** How do you score a tree where both off game and a coon are seen in the same tree?

**A:** You should give the dogs the benefit of the doubt and plus the points.

### Off Game or a Coon

**Q:** What if a cast cannot all agree whether the game seen in the tree is a coon or some other off game?

**A:** The judge of the cast shall make the decision on whether it is a coon or not, based on his or her opinion. If anyone in the cast does not agree with the judge's decision, they may ask for a cast vote. It would then take a majority voting against the judge in order for his or her decision to be reversed. In a four-dog cast, it would take all three handlers voting against the judge. Two and two is not a majority to overturn the judge's decision.

### Act of Courtesy Questioned

**Q:** In a three-dog cast, all dogs are declared treed. I was the hunting judge. Two of the dogs were treed on a fairly steep bank of a creek. Soon after we started shining one of the guys yelled at me and said my dog came into the tree, which I saw as well. So, I asked the one handler if he would tie my dog for me if I threw him my lead strap. He said sure and that's what he did. After he tied my dog, the other handler wanted him scratched for handling another handler's dog. Does UKC have any such rule that I'm not aware of?

**A:** There are obviously handler infractions that do result in a scratch. But this is not one of them. Not even close. Last time I checked leashing and tying a dog back for another handler in the cast is a form of courtesy and good sportsmanship. For the record, UKC defines "handling" as verbally calling the dog struck and treed. Physically handling a dog may be done by the handler or anyone else in the cast, if needed.

### Agreeing to Allow Track and Train Handhelds to be Carried is not an Option

Have you ever, as a handler, been involved in a cast

where all handlers agree to allow the handheld of a track and training device to be carried by the handlers? If so, you might think about what you are doing before you agree to something that is against the rules. No judge or handler has the authority or the option to agree to disregard any rule.

If such a question ever arises in a cast you are involved with, you would be well advised to speak up and let the rest of the cast know that "we don't have the option of agreeing to disregard a rule."

### Honesty and Integrity

How many times have you heard someone tell the story of how they got cheated at a nite hunt? Sometimes it becomes apparent that it's more of an issue with the complainant and not knowing and understanding the rules well enough. Sometimes it's an excuse for the dog. Sometimes it's the truth!

One's honesty and integrity certainly play a key role when it comes to making decisions during the course of a nite hunt. We are very appreciative of those hunters and judges who can always be counted on to base their decisions on doing the right thing according to the situation at hand regardless of how it affects the dog they are handling. The rules provided for nite hunts work flawlessly for the most part if the honesty and integrity of those involved is what it should be. Otherwise, judgment calls or voting situations can certainly change the outcome of a cast winner.

Furthermore, what is a win or a title really worth when we got caught up in scoring something wrong for the simple sake of winning? I'm fairly certain that hounds don't care whether they win or lose. Titles on the line or not, they simply don't always perform according to the reputation they may have earned. However, that should never be the case when it comes to judges and handlers. Their integrity and reputation IS always on the line during the course of a nite hunt. Five or ten years from now, we will have forgotten the dog that got an undeserved win, but we certainly won't forget the face of a dishonest handler. It's good to be reminded of this every now and then and to be encouraged to be a positive influence for the new guys coming into our sport. Some things are out of our control. Our honesty and integrity is now one of those things. Our actions and the choices we make determine our integrity.

### ATTENTION!

The following person's Nite Hunt Director and Nite Hunt Judging privileges have been suspended until the date listed.

**Justin Crockett • Senatobia, MS**

**May 1, 2024**

Violations to these privileges should be reported to the United Kennel Club.



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